

PARTNERS

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Photo by Kenneth Losurdo Jr.

Tour Successes

By W. Edward Lilley,
Visitor Information Center Manager

Howard County Tourism's Tour season was very successful indeed. We played host to over 1,000 students who came to visit and take our heritage tour. Parental chaperones and teachers and instructional assistants joined the students on the tours. On many occasions they visited other local sights as well, including the Patapsco Female Institute, The B & O Railroad Museum: Ellicott City Station and the Benjamin Banneker Historical Park. We will be attempting to lure the general public each month with 2nd Saturday Heritage Tours at 2:00PM.



Photo by Kenneth Losurdo Jr.

Our ever-popular ghost tours continue to attract from near and far! These tours are offered every Friday & Saturday evening in Ellicott City beginning in April and running through November. We also do a Ghost Walk in historic Savage Mill in October and November. Around 3,000 guests learned about our local history and the recent paranormal activities occurring throughout town.

Our most popular tour this year was the Friday the 13th tour: we sold out a total of 13 tours on the 13th! We greatly appreciated the participation of many of our Main Street partners on the Friday the 13th tour, and hope to expand that participation in the future.

This year we will present 2 Friday the 13th tours (April and July) in both Ellicott City and Savage. The Full Moon tours will take place on the nights of the full moons beginning in April and run each month thereafter through November. December will kick off our "Spirits of Christmas Past" tour. There seems to be no shortage of ghosts in our county, and we are glad that they are willing to work for Tourism!

Want late-breaking Tourism news? Visit our new blog: <http://visithowardcounty.typepad.com/>!



Blossoms of Hope: The Howard County Cherry Tree Project

Howard County Tourism, Inc. and *Blossoms of Hope: The Howard County Cherry Blossom Project* are thrilled to announce the hiring of *Blossoms*' very first Executive Director, Victoria Goodman. Ms. Goodman recently resigned from her post with Howard County Government, where she served for the past 8 years as the County's Public Information Officer. She has been intimately involved with *Blossoms* since its inception, bringing her noted creativity, artistic inspiration, and encyclopedic knowledge of the County to the project.

Rachelina Bonacci, Executive Director of Howard County Tourism, says "Victoria Goodman served as an exceptional *ex officio* member of Howard County Tourism's Board of Directors. When she first learned of the *Blossoms of Hope* concept, she immediately embraced the spirit of the project and brought it to the attention of then-Howard County Executive Jim Robey. Since then, Ms. Goodman worked with the Howard County Tourism Team to successfully grow *Blossoms of Hope*. We are delighted she has accepted our invitation to officially join our team and direct the project."

The Tourism Team looks forward to working with Ms. Goodman on upcoming *Blossoms* events, including the 95th Annual Parade of the National Cherry Blossom Festival and the County's first-ever Cherrybration. Please stay tuned as the Project continues to grow!

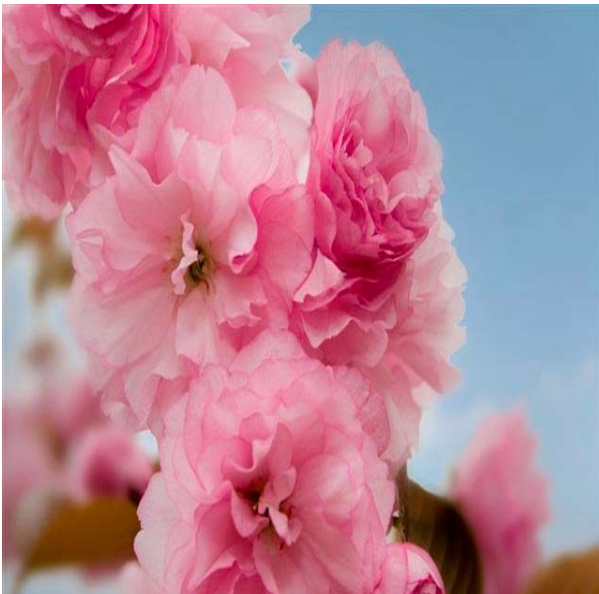


Photo by Kenneth Losurdo Jr.

Save the Date!

Mardi Gras Magnifique --
Tersiguel's, Ellicott City
February 20, 2007

Cherrybration --
Centennial Park, Ellicott City
April 28, 2007

Soirée! --
Belmont Conference Center, ElkrIDGE
June 6, 2007

FAM Tour Success



Erin Van Bavel, Tourism's Group Sales & Marketing Manager, barely had time to settle in at her desk before she was handed the task of coordinating and managing a FAM tour for 50 State Welcome Center employees. Erin proved well up to the task, as the many thank-you notes we've received from happy FAM participants have proven.

Over the three days and two nights of their visit to Howard County, the Welcome Center employees visited many of Tourism's partners, enjoying experiences as diverse as the African Art Museum of Maryland, Clark's Elioak Farm, and The Mall in Columbia along the way. All FAM participants were graciously housed at Turf Valley Resort, where the newly-renovated guest rooms got raves. They also enjoyed their meals at Alexandra's, the Elkridge Furnace Inn, the Comfort Inn and Suites Columbia, Tersiguel's, and the Crab Shanty.

State Welcome Center employees serve on the front line of tourism assistance throughout Maryland, and they were thrilled with their tour of Howard County. These Information Specialists serve as front line ambassadors to over 2,077,000 travelers every year. Moreover, Maryland Welcome Center employees booked over \$50,000 in hotel reservations for travelers in 2005.

We've received extremely positive feedback from the FAM attendees, including these kind words: "Thank you so much for the tour of Howard County. It was such a wonderful experience becoming reacquainted with the accommodations, restaurants, shops, and attractions in your county. The FAM was a fantastic reminder that

HCT has been very pleased with the media coverage the County received over the first 2 quarters of FY '07. Media placements and stories included the following:

Media Hits

PRINT:

DC MD VA Home & Design Magazine: Home Style in Historic Ellicott City
Recreation News (July-August) RV-ing on the Historic National Road
Washingtonian August 2006: Ellicott City named top Fall Weekend
Grapevine September 2006: Falling in Love with Ellicott City (4-pages with photos)
The Washington Times 9/18: Mover & Shaker Erin Van Bavel (photo/interview included)
The Howard County Times 9/21: Meet Erin Van Bavel
The Baltimore Sun 9/27: No clock shall die before its time (Erin Van Bavel quoted)
Recreation News September 2006: Watch Horses Fly
Business Monthly October 2006: Several Stories in main section PLUS insert!
The Washington Post (Weekend) 10/6: Following in the Footsteps of Local Ghosts
The Baltimore Sun 10/20: Howard's tree program blossoms beyond expectations
The Baltimore Sun 10/4: People on the Move
The Baltimore Examiner 10/30: Ellicott City, Hotbed for the Paranormal
The Washington Post Howard section, 10/26 (cover & centerfold)
Howard County Times 10/26 (cover & centerfold)

TELEVISION:

WBAL News Channel 11 10/30: Maryland Town Claims To Be Truly Haunted

RADIO:

Clear View Radio WVIE 1370am 10/21: interview with Zohara Meyerhoff Hieronimus.
AM talk radio WVIE 1370 10/31: Live radio interview about ghost tours (morning show)

Tradeshow Tales

By Erin Van Bavel,
Group Sales & Marketing Manager

The last few months of 2006 were busy for the sales team. On November 2, Howard County had an impressive presence at the first annual Mid-Atlantic Conference and Exposition (MACE), held at the Washington D.C. Convention Center. This tradeshow was organized by the Potomac Chapter of Meetings Planners International and was attended by approximately 135 meeting professionals. Maria D'Amato from the Belmont Conference Center and Stephanie Bolton James from Turf Valley Resort partnered with Lexi Levy and Erin Van Bavel to promote Howard County meeting venues and services.

On November 21, Howard County was back in D.C., this time working with the Maryland Office of Tourism at the Meetings Quest D.C. tradeshow. This busy show was attended by hundreds of regional meeting professionals. Through our cooperative partnership with the Maryland Office of Tourism, we were able to bring back over 800 leads from this show.

In 2007, Howard County Tourism will add even more trade-shows to the schedule by participating in the Maryland Office of Tourism Tradeshow Co-Op program. The tentative schedule is as follows:

- April 11-12: Affordable Meetings Mid-America, Chicago
- June 14: Springtime in the Park, Washington D.C.
- August 11-14: American Society of Association Executives, Chicago
- September 5-6: Affordable Meetings National, Washington D.C.
- October 23-27: TEAMS, Louisville
- November (Date TBA) Meetings Quest and PMPI Mid-Atlantic Conference and Exposition, both in Washington, DC



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The sales team is looking forward to promoting Howard County and bringing new business to our hotels, meeting venues, restaurants, stores and attractions!

Upcoming Partner Events!

1/19/07: Annual Bridal Extravaganza – Sixty-five bridal and wedding vendors, an elegant bridal fashion show, and a full dinner are the highlights of this year's Bridal Extravaganza at Turf Valley Resort. Overnight packages are available! For information or reservations: (410) 423-0812 or www.turfvalleyresort.com.

1/21/07: The American Heart Association (AHA) is hosting a "Go Red for Women" Day on Sunday, January 21st at 4 pm at the University of Maryland -- College Park campus. The Lady Terps will be playing Wake Forest. For this game only, partial proceeds will benefit the American Heart Association: tickets for the game are only \$5, and \$3 from each ticket sold through the UMTerps website (with the promotional code: HEART) will be donated to the American Heart Association. For tickets and information, visit www.umterps.com

2/24/07: Save the date for an elegant jazz-themed Evening in the Stacks! This year marks the 10th anniversary of Howard County Library's sellout fundraiser, which will be held at the East Columbia Branch on February 24, 2007 from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. This year's gala event features the music of the Junkyard Saints, delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts, an open bar (including a signature drink), and an elegant 40s nightclub atmosphere. For more information, check www.hclibrary.org or call (410) 313-7750.

3/18/07: Columbia Pro Cantare presents a program of Schubert and Grieg. 2007 marks the centennial of Grieg's death, so noted Howard County pianist Alison Matuskey will be featured playing selections from his *Lyric Pieces for Piano, Op. 12, 38 & 47*. Schubert's *Mass No. 2 in G Major* and Grieg's last composition, *Four Psalms, Op. 74* round out this lovely program. Visit www.procantare.org for information and tickets.

W i n t e r K i d s

If you find that your kids are suffering from winter malaise – boredom, whininess, restlessness, squabbling – consider yourself lucky: there is lots to do in Howard County even during the cold winter months! Here are a few of the kid-friendly options available locally:

Holiday Festival of Trains, B&O Railroad Museum – Ellicott City Station: This annual tradition is always a treat for children and adults alike. Open Wednesday through Sunday from 11 AM to 4 PM through January 28, 2007. Additional information is available at www.ecborail.org or by phone at (410) 461-1945.

Candlelight Concerts Children's Series, Smith Theatre at Howard Community College: Two concerts remain in the Children's Series. The next show will be Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer, a Grammy-award winning team whose show includes music, comedy, instrument making, history, and trick roping! For more information, check www.candlelightconcerts.org or call (410) 715-1327.

Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks, various locations: Recreation and Parks offers a wide range of activities for children throughout the winter season. There is something for every interest: sports play, visual and performing arts classes, educational programs, even cooking workshops. Recreations and Parks' winter brochure is available online at www.co.ho.md.us/rap, or in hard copy at the Visitors' Information Center.

Toby's Youth Theatre, Toby's Dinner Theatre – Columbia: Toby's offers a series of child-friendly live theatre experiences throughout the year. January's featured show is "Ben Carson, M.D.," based on the inspirational life story of Hopkins' famed pediatric neurosurgeon. February will bring "Number the Stars," based on the children's book by Lois Lowry. For tickets or information, go online at www.tobysdinnertheatre.com or call (410) 730-8311.

PlayWiseKids, 6570 Dobbin Road, Columbia: Open daily for imaginative, indoors play, PlayWiseKids offers a variety of play and creative experience for children of all ages. In addition, the Emmy Award-winning Kinderman will bring his magic to PlayWiseKids again on January 25th. Bring your kids to the show and stay to play! Additional information at www.playwisekids.com or by telephone at (410) 772-1540.

Columbia Orchestra Young People's Concerts, Jim Rouse Theatre for the Performing Arts: The next Young People's Concert is scheduled for January 13th and features Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf." Shows will be held at 12:30 and 3:00 p.m., with the musical instrument petting zoo open between 1:30 and 3:00! Information is available at www.columbiaorchestra.com or by phone at (410) 465-8777.



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST AND TINIEST PARTNERS

Congratulations to Special Events & Projects Manager Amanda Hof on the birth of her baby boy, Jason Caleb Hof! Jason was born on November 30 – mere hours after Amanda took part in the holiday card photo shoot at Clark's Elioak Farm. He's already attended the team retreat, and we were thrilled to have his input.

Fisher's Bakery also has a new addition. Chris Sikora and his family welcomed little Andrea Jane on December 13th. We welcome her to Main Street!

Team Tourism

Contact Information:

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Howard County Tourism Team

Executive Director: Rachelina Bonacci
Visitor Information Center Manager: Ed Lilley
Special Events & Projects Manager: Amanda Hof
Sales & Partnership Development Manager: Lexi Levy
Group Sales & Marketing Manager: Erin Van Bavel
Interns: Vanessa Willams and Lori Paddy
Part-Time Staff: Judy Brown, Cindy Hirshberg, Nanette Hunter, Clark Wagner

**A big welcome to
our newest partners!**

Amerock – A Newell Rubbermaid Company

**American Cancer Society –
Howard County Chapter**

Days Inn and Suites Laurel

Sears Grand

**The Well/Ellicott City
Wellness**

Vibrant Artwear



Your fulltime Tourism Team!
Photo by
Kenneth Losurdo Jr.

Partners!

Please don't forget to send us your brochures, cards, and other promotional materials for display in the Visitors' Information Center.

Let us promote your business for you!

Mardi Gras Magnifique!

Fat Tuesday is almost here. New Orleans desperately needs tourist dollars. How can one combine the two? If you can't make it to the Big Easy, do the next best thing and come to Tersiguel's French Country Restaurant in Ellicott City for some Mardi Gras revelry. Tersiguel's is again hosting Mardi Gras Magnifique, a benefit luncheon for the Ellicott City Restoration Foundation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Hurricane Recovery Fund. As everyone knows, historic preservation is a huge tourism draw in both Ellicott City and New Orleans, and every dollar counts.

This year's event promises to be a big success. The costs of the event have been generously underwritten by Tersiguel's and Sears Grand – Ellicott City, so 100% of each ticket's \$75 cost is tax-deductible. The menu includes such Cajun- and Creole-inspired classics as catfish pecan Meunière, eggs Sardou, bananas Foster bread pudding, and brandy milk punch (all menu items subject to change). Masquerade attire is encouraged! For information, call (410) 313-1900 or email team@visithowardcounty.com. Laissez le bon temps rouler!